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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/864,870	05/25/2001	Simon Paul Davis	3036/49955	2274
23911	7590	04/07/2005	EXAMINER	
CROWELL & MORING LLP INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY GROUP P.O. BOX 14300 WASHINGTON, DC 20044-4300			NGUYEN, VAN KIM T	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2151	

DATE MAILED: 04/07/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/864,870

Applicant(s)

DAVIS ET AL.

Examiner

Van Kim T. Nguyen

Art Unit

2151

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 March 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 6-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☐ Claim(s) 1 and 6-8 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 9 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

1. This Office Action is responsive to communications filed on March 16, 2005.
 - Claims 2-5 and 10 have been cancelled. Claims 1 and 6-9 are pending.
 - The amendments to the Specification has been reviewed and approved.
 - The amendments to the Abstract has been reviewed and approved.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

3. Claims 1 and 6-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hughes et al (US 6,747,971), in view of Joo et al (US 5,963,552).

Regarding claim 1, as shown in Figures 1-10, Hughes discloses a method of operating a packet switch (200) comprising a plurality of ingress means (304a-n), a plurality of egress means (306a-n), a cross-bar (305) and a controller (314), the cross-bar being connected between the ingress means and the egress means to transfer multicast (312a-n) and unicast (313) data traffic from the ingress means to the egress means; the method comprising the steps of:

- a) determining if the data traffic to be transferred is unicast or multicast (col. 6: lines 27-30, and col. 9: lines 7-17);
- b) if the data traffic is unicast, invoking a unicast schedule (col. 9: lines 33-47);

Art Unit: 2151

- c) if the traffic is multicast, invoking a multicast schedule (col. 9: lines 48-63); and
- d) transferring the data traffic in accordance with the invoked schedule (cols. 2-17).

Hughes also discloses determining a priority for each ingress means for sending the cells (col. 12: lines 41-43; and col. 17: lines 56 – col. 18: line 2).

Hughes also discloses the priority for each ingress means is based on the combination of send opportunities (Multicast Grant Preference Pointer and Multicast Round Robin Pointer; col. 17: line 63 – col. 18: line 54).

Hughes discloses substantially all the claimed limitations, but does not explicitly call for step c) to further comprise forming a multicast cell fanout table containing current fanout requirements for a cell at the head of a multicast queue in each ingress means.

As shown in Figures 1-8, Joo teaches forming a multicast cell fanout table (22) containing current fanout requirements (MCN and VPI/VCI information) for a cell (col. 3: line 66- col. 4: line 6; and col. 4: lines 38-41).

Joo also discloses setting eligible bits (“1”) for multicast cells which are currently allowed to be scheduled (Joo: col. 5: lines 20-25).

As multicasting provides an efficient way to transmit information from point-to-multipoints, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made necessary transmitting information for a cell contained in the multicasting routing table can be used in Hughes’ crosspoint switch scheduler, motivated by the need to conserve bandwidth and improve efficiency of the communications system.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. Regarding claims 6-7, the combination of Hughes and Joo also discloses the step of e) filling a multicast schedule in accordance with full fanout of the first priority assigned to each ingress means (Hughes: col. 17: lines 12-29; and col. 17: line 51 – col. 18: line 55). Though the combination of Hughes and Joo does not explicitly specify a blank multicast schedule, but it is obvious the schedule must be blank before the filling since there would be no switch frame selection done yet.

Regarding claim 8, the combination of Hughes and Joo also discloses step e) further comprises the step of: (ii) filling in as much of the fanout of the next priority ingress means and subsequent ingress means as possible to complete the schedule (Hughes: col. 17: lines 30-39).

As multicasting provides an efficient way to transmit information from point-to-multipoints, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made necessary transmitting information for a cell contained in the multicasting routing table can be used in Hughes' crosspoint switch scheduler, motivated by the need to conserve bandwidth and improve efficiency of the communications system.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claim 9 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

See Previous Office Action for Reason for Allowance.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed March 16, 2005 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

Applicant argues that the combination of Hughes and Joo does not "calls for determining the priority for each ingress means, based on a combination of send opportunities of the ingress means, as recited in Claim 1, as amended" because "the purpose of the Multicast Grant Preference Pointer is simply to determine whether a multicast request is to be preferred over a unicast request"; and "the Multicast Round Robin Pointer is simply used to select a particular multicast request if more than one such request exists" (See page 11: lines 6-16).

However, since prioritizing an ingress means is basically selecting an ingress means based on certain preferences, the references of records meets the claim, i.e., the combination of Hughes and Joo discloses the Multicast/Unicast Grant Preference Pointer is used to determine whether to use a grant preference ranking scheme (prioritized scheme) that prefers multicast traffic, or, in the alternative, unicast traffic (Hughes, col. 18: lines 11-14); and the Multicast/Unicast Grant Preference Pointer, in combination with the Multicast Round Robin Pointer, is used to guarantee 100% fairness to all ingress ports (Hughes, col. 18: lines 32-34). The combination of Hughes and Joo further discloses that the input control port, may also use the reference and round robin pointers to resolve multiple grant contention after it first determines which grants are highest priority according to the active preference ranking scheme (Hughes: col. 18: lines 49-54). Thus, these two pointers are used to determined the schedule priority of each ingress means for sending the cells, based on a combination of send opportunities of the ingress means.

Conclusion

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Van Kim T. Nguyen whose telephone number is 571-272-3073. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Zarni Maung, can be reached on 571-272-3939. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 2151

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Van Kim T. Nguyen
Examiner
Art Unit 2151

vkn


ZARNI MAUNG
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER